

Application No.: 10/720,197

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising the steps of:
- forming a thin film made of an inorganic material;
 - forming a resist film containing carbon on the thin film and thereafter patterning the formed resist film to form a resist pattern from the resist film;
 - exposing the resist pattern to a gas containing sulfur to improve a strength of sidewalls of the resist pattern; and
 - performing dry etching of the thin film using as a mask the resist pattern whose strength has been improved because of ~~exposed to~~ the gas containing sulfur.
2. (Original) The method for fabricating a semiconductor device of Claim 1, wherein the inorganic material contains silicon, and an etching gas employed for the dry etching is a fluorocarbon gas.
3. (Original) The method for fabricating a semiconductor device of Claim 1, wherein the gas containing sulfur is sulfur dioxide.
4. (Original) The method for fabricating a semiconductor device of Claim 1, wherein the gas containing sulfur is in a plasma state.
5. (Original) The method for fabricating a semiconductor device of Claim 1, wherein the step of exposing the resist pattern to the gas containing sulfur and the step of performing dry etching constitute the same step.

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6. (Previously presented) The method for fabricating a semiconductor device of Claim 1, wherein a line width of the resist pattern is 200nm or less.

7. (Previously presented) The method for fabricating a semiconductor device of Claim 1, wherein a value of the ratio of a height of the resist pattern to a line width thereof is 2.8 or more.